

Consumer Information on Development of the Employment Plan

About The Employment Plan

If you are eligible for the VR Program, the next step is to develop your Employment Plan.

The Employment Plan is a written, signed agreement you and your counselor make about:

- Your **employment goal**. This is the type of job you and your counselor agree is right for you. "Right for you" means you and your employer will be satisfied with your performance and the job fits your career interests and abilities.
- **Services** you both agree you need to get ready for, find, and keep that job.
 - Before you receive a service, it must be in your Employment Plan and your DRS counselor must have sent written pre-approval to the service provider.
 - Include all services, even if DRS is not paying for them. List the type of service, date it will begin, service provider name, cost (if known), and funding source(s). For certain services you and your counselor must consider your ability to pay, look for non-VR funding sources, and determine DRS' maximum approved fee.
- How and when to **measure your progress**. You and your DRS counselor may talk about your Employment Plan and progress at any time. However, your **review dates** must be at least once a year. Progress measures must be a measurable outcome (e.g., learned a skill, changed a behavior) with a way to measure it (e.g., grades, vendor reports). You must make **satisfactory progress** to keep getting services.
- **Statements and Certifications, and Rights, Terms and Conditions, and responsibilities**. This is your rights and responsibilities as a DRS customer, counselor responsibilities, and the terms and conditions under which your services are provided.
- **Signatures**. You and your DRS counselor sign the Plan only if you agree to everything in it.

Who Develops Your Employment Plan

You and your DRS counselor work together on your Employment Plan. You may do some, or all, of this on your own or with someone else. However, your Plan is not final until both you and your counselor agree to it and sign it.

Your DRS counselor helps you make informed decisions by:

- Helping you get and use any new information needed.
- Providing vocational counseling and guidance.
- Explaining DRS policies and how they affect you.
- Coordinating your VR services with other agencies serving you (e.g., special education services for student with a disability)

The Employment Plan RS-5 form and Substantial Amendment RS-5b form

- The Employment Plan must be written on the Virginia DRS Employment Plan form (RS-5).
- At any time, you and your DRS counselor may talk about **changing the Plan**. Before the change takes effect, you both must agree to the change, put it in writing on the Employment Plan (or Substantial Amendment RS-5b form as appropriate), and sign and date the change.
- The RS-5 and RS-5b forms ask for everything the law requires. Your DRS counselor will help you with them. Both forms are on the DRS Web site.

At any time, you may call the **Client Assistance Program (CAP)** at the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy toll-free at 1-800-552-3962 (Voice/TTY). They may help you develop the Employment Plan, resolve problems with carrying out the Employment Plan, and advocate for you if you disagree with or appeal a DRS decision about your vocational rehabilitation.